

ANNUAL REPORT

CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM

1976-77



**Printed Under the Direction of the
State Budget and Control Board**

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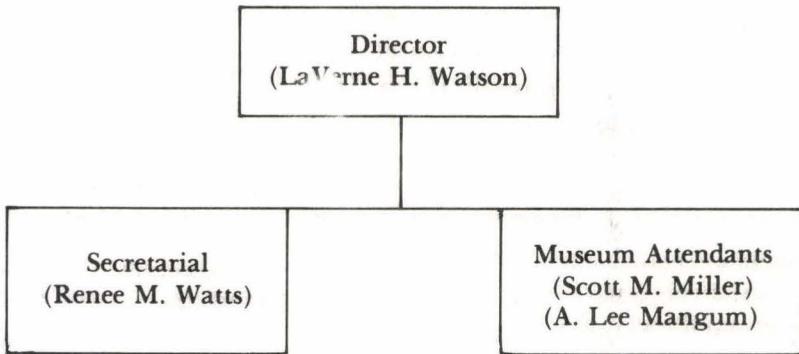


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CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM



Director

The director is responsible for the entire operation of the museum. In addition to supervising the every day operation, she is responsible for locating and acquiring gifts, keeping abreast of the latest methods of preservation and display, and identifying objects for the public, preparation of the budget request.

Secretarial

The secretary is responsible for office management including secretarial work, personnel records, answering the telephone and screening calls, proper accounting and expenditures of all monies, assisting in the preparation of the budget.

Museum Attendant

One museum attendant is responsible for scheduling and conducting tours and meetings, giving information to visitors, making costumes, performing research, acquisitions, restoration of fabrics, keeping the museum area clean and attractive, and exhibits which includes designing and changing displays.

Museum Attendant

The other museum attendant is responsible for the inventory, accessioning of gifts, cleaning guns, swords, etc. periodically, preservation, labelling and sign making, assisting with tours, research, carpentry, fabricating, display cases and changing exhibits.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MUSEUM

Our function is to provide museum services. We collect, preserve and display items of historical value from all periods of South Carolina history. Additional functions include research; aiding other museums upon request; organizing and conducting tours; supplying information to visitors and the public; identifying objects; supplying speakers for schools, civic groups and homes for the elderly.

Primarily we are an educational institution and education is the justification for what we do. Our services are for the benefit of our people.

The highlight of the past year was our receiving Accreditation from the American Association of Museums. This demonstrates we operate on a professional level in accordance with standards of excellence prescribed by the American Association of Museums.

The director serves as secretary of the South Carolina Federation of Museums. We hosted the annual convention for this organization.

Three lectures were given to the Museology class of the University of South Carolina.

HISTORY OF THE AGENCY

This collection was started in 1895. In 1901 the Legislature provided a room in the State House to house the artifacts and in 1902 appropriated monies for its maintenance.

Throughout the years, items of historical value have been collected and preserved from all periods of South Carolina history. Previously no funds have been provided for purchases. The values of gifts received by the State far exceed the expenditures appropriated throughout the years. And as time marches on, the current market values steadily increase. We are completing a financial inventory of the collection.

COLLECTIONS

These are a primary concern. We attempt to acquire as many South Carolina items of historical value as possible, lest they be lost to us. Too frequently our relics appear in antique shops, many drift out of State. By attending museum and historical meetings, we have cultivated and maintained good contacts and are able to form new ones. Many of our gifts come from out of state, although the roots

were in South Carolina. Each acquisition must be accessioned, cataloged, inventoried in a cross reference file, then placed in storage.

Acquisitions:

With no funds for purchases, all items acquired are gifts. Among the more interesting received were five (5) flags, circa 1861-65; an 1863 Naval cutlass and powder horn; 1861 Tower musket; the Cavalry sabre and scabbard of John Foster; a cross section of a 12 pounder, showing the percussion cap fuse of bronze in the cast iron ball, the minnie balls, and the gun powder, which has been neutralized; an extremely rare scarafier (bleeder) captured near York, South Carolina, in 1865; a silver stamp box, which belonged to General Ellison Capers; four (4) uniforms of Major General George L. Mabry, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor; military accessories for the uniforms given by General William C. Westmoreland, former Chief of Staff of the Army; a Marine Corps green winter uniform with overcoat and khaki shirt and pants, circa Viet Nam; four (4) elegant dresses and a black velvet beaded vest, circa 1840; a Ramsey's History of South Carolina, 1858.

Preservation:

It is necessary to keep abreast of the latest techniques in preservation. Often extensive sewing is necessary in affording proper care to fabrics, including clothing, flags, etc. Swords and firearms must be cleaned and oiled semi-annually. Woods and leathers must be treated periodically. If we know not how to preserve our heirlooms, then we would be wasting our time in collecting them.

Display:

We have the responsibility of telling the South Carolina story through a museum which is attractive, informative and appealing. Our visitors must be impressed by what they see and learn. Display cases must be kept clean and refabricated (covered in cloth) periodically. Touch-up painting is necessary. Props for display must be constructed. The narrative must be composed for each case, then signs made. We have just completed relabelling and adding additional narrative in every display case. Each time we change an exhibit, the process starts again. We changed seventeen (17) exhibits last year. All of the above work is performed by the staff.

PROGRAMS

For the Bicentennial we made a uniform, similar to those worn by the men in the South Carolina Provincial Regiment. The making of

the uniform entailed researching the style, purchasing material as near the texture and colors as used in the Revolutionary era, locating patterns and appropriate buttons, then the actual workmanship. We loaned this uniform and period dresses we had formerly made to various individuals who were staging commemorations in their areas. This also entailed extensive research to fulfill their many requests.

We organize all day tours for school teachers and civic groups. We provide speakers for schools, historical, civic and senior groups. This is in addition to the 471 tours conducted at the museum during the past year. We gave tours or opened for meetings on nine (9) weekends, and on five (5) occasions after hours. We were open for the public on three (3) weekends.

FINANCES

During the past year approximately 75% of our budget was earmarked for personal service, with approximately 25% for operating expenses. This is not uncommon in the operation of museums. As pointed out in G. Ellis Burcaw's *Introduction to Museum Work*, published by the American Association for State and Local History, "a healthy situation is that two thirds of the annual operating budget should be devoted to salaries. Even 75% may not be excessive under some circumstances." In our 1977-78 budget, our salaries will be at approximately 65%, with operating expenses at approximately 35%.

VISITORS

Our 76,000 visitors came from 50 states and 23 foreign countries representing every continent.

Visitors bring many objects to us for identification. If we are unable to identify an item, we refer the visitor to the proper authority.

Many researchers and students request our assistance. In the recently published volume *The Confederate Flags in the Army of Tennessee*, eleven (11) South Carolina flags are included, with pictures, descriptions and credits. Five (5) of those flags are in this collection. In the forthcoming volume *The Confederate Flags of the Army of Northern Virginia*, sixteen (16) flags in this collection are to be included. Working with authors is time consuming, but rewarding. We were guests on the Monday 7:30 Report produced by ETV in January. We worked with representatives of the Chamber of

Commerce in the filming and script for a TV documentation on Richland and Lexington Counties.

1976-77 STATISTICAL DATA

Visitors	76,000
States represented by visitors	50
Foreign countries represented by visitors	23
Lectures to groups at the museum	471
Lectures to groups outside the museum	7
People present at lectures	21,500
Telephone inquiries	2,050
Inquiries by correspondence & visitors	2,900
Hours of research	2,416
Items acquired & cataloged	44
Books & brochures acquired	19
Exhibits changed	17
Speeches outside the museum	10
Tours & meetings after regular hours	14
Firearms & swords cleaned, oiled	121
Historical pictures acquired	3
Museum meetings attended	8
Display cases refabricated — repaired	15
Flags repaired	3
Inventory — hours spent	1,395
Number of hours identifying objects for the public	226

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